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would in effect be giving away our bargaining position in advance. Any necessary reductions in our forces should be made, in my view, only after and possibly as a part of a disarmament agreement with the Soviets, not prior to the negotiations.

I also believe our position will likewise be seriously compromised in any negotiations of a Berlin settlement if we were to take unilateral steps now towards cutting back our strength in Europe.

In addition to these two basic considerations, I should also point out that there are at present various strains on the NATO Alliance which would certainly become much more acute if there were to be major withdrawals of U.S. units. De Gaulle's nationalistic attitudes, British efforts to change basic NATO strategy, and potential shortfalls in meeting minimum force requirements can result in a feeling of general discouragement about the effectiveness of NATO defenses and increase any latent tendency to reach an accommodation with the Soviets which would be inimical to our interests.

Christian A. Herter

Clearances:

RA - Mr. Tuthill } R7
 Mr. Magill
EUR - Mr. White } DW
 S/S -

R7
EUR/RA:RFessenden:cnc
10/12/59

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